

**CITY OF EAU CLAIRE
PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES**

Meeting of January 19, 2015

City Hall, Council Chambers

7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Messrs. Weld, Hibbard, Larsen, Pederson, Granlund, Seymour, Radabaugh,
Ms. Mitchell, Ms. Ebert

Staff Present: Messrs. Tufte, Ivory, Noel, Genskow

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Weld.

1. **REZONING (Z-1554-14) – P-Public to R-3P, 2010 6th Street; and
SITE PLAN (SP-1501) – 10-Unit Apartment Building**

Mr. Tufte presented a request to rezone property from P-Public to R-3P and to adopt the General Development Plan for a 10-unit apartment building at the northwest corner of 6th Street and Vine Street. The site was a former fire station and the building has been demolished. The Comprehensive Plan indicates the parcel is appropriate for medium residential development. The surrounding properties have R-3 zoning. There is a combination of existing 4-plexes, older single family homes and an old industrial building. There are 17 stalls proposed, meeting required parking. The parking lot should be redesigned to eliminate the two front yard parking stalls and reduce hard surface coverage. Sidewalk connections need to be made to public sidewalks. The sign must be reviewed by permit.

Applicant, Jason Griepentrog with Hoss Bros., LLC stated he will work with staff to address the conditions of the staff report.

No one spoke at the public hearing.

Mr. Hibbard stated the area should be rezoned R-M. Less units should be approved for the lot because adjacent properties contain less multi-family units.

Ms. Mitchell moved to recommend approval of the zoning. Mrs. Ebert seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Hibbard voted nay. Mr. Seymour moved to approve the site plan with the conditions listed in the staff report and added a condition that the sign be moved and reviewed with permit. Seconded by Mr. Pederson and the motion carried. Mr. Hibbard voted nay.

2. **REZONING (Z-1555-15) – R-1 and R-3 to R-2P, Western Avenue**

Mr. Tufte presented a request to rezone property from R-1 and R-3 to R-2P and to adopt the General Development Plan for two 4-plexes on the west side of the proposed development and six duplexes to the east side. The location is at the east side of Western Avenue, north of Waller Street through to N. Hastings Way. The site is 3.84 acres. Staff recommends the parcel should be zoned the same to eliminate current dual zoning. There is concern with adequate fire access since private drives are proposed. The developer should work with staff to address proper road access. Staff recommends to postpone the item so parties can work out a redesigned plan.

Richard Golde, 2403 London Road and owner of property, stated he is willing to meet with staff to re-examine the development concept and private driveways.

No one spoke at the public hearing.

Ms. Mitchell moved to postpone the item. Seconded by Mr. Hibbard and the motion carried.

3. **ANNEXATION (14-4A) – Two parcels from the Town of Seymour**

Mr. Tufte presented a request to annex two parcels of vacant land from the Town of Seymour to allow development at the location north and south sides of the North Crossing, east of Black Avenue. The total area is 19.6 acres and the land for development is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Pederson stated the nearby Xcel Energy liquefied natural gas tanks have a blast zone requirement and the property owner should be notified in case it affects future development.

Mr. Granlund moved to recommend approval of the annexation request. Mr. Larsen seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Hibbard voted nay.

4. **PRELIMINARY PLAT (P-1-15) – Herbison Hills, Town of Seymour**

Mr. Tufte presented a request to approve the preliminary plat for Herbison Hills in the Town of Seymour. The project site is located at the southwest corner of CTH "Q" and South 72nd Avenue. The site is within the City's Extra-Territorial Review Area but outside the Urban Sewer Service Area. The developer proposes to split the 40-acre parcel into four 10-acre lots. The proposal is consistent with the town's 5-acre lot or larger agreement.

Gary Herbison, spoke in favor of the project.

Mr. Hibbard moved to approve the preliminary plat. Seconded by Mr. Pederson and the motion carried.

5. **STREET VACATION – Eau Claire Street**

Mr. Radabaugh recused himself from the item.

Mr. Genskow stated the City intends to vacate a portion of Eau Claire Street from Graham Avenue west to the Chippewa River for future private and public development. The right-of-way is no longer needed, but the certified survey map retains an easement for utilities.

Mr. Hibbard move to recommend approval of the street vacation. Mr. Larsen seconded and the item carried.

6. **SITE PLAN (SP-1502) – Site Plan for a Master Sign Plan for a shopping center, Fairfax Street**

Mr. Ivory presented a request to approve a master sign plan for the Fairfax Street retail shopping center, located at 2205-2225 Fairfax Street. Currently there are about nine tenant spaces, each one having a cabinet-style sign, except Jim Bob's Pizza, which has an extra sign. There is also a pylon sign for the whole strip center. Time Federal Savings Bank, which is connected to the center, added flat-surface cut-out aluminum channel letters for a new sign a few years ago when they remodeled their facade. The owner is now proposing to have a

combination of cabinet signs, illuminated channel-letter signs and non-illuminated individual letter signs. This would be a significant change that deviates from the norm at the retail center. The objective of master sign plans is to provide some consistency in signage.

The majority of plan commissioners thought the center should only have illuminated cabinet and illuminated channel-letter signs.

Mr. Radabaugh moved to approve the master sign plan to only allow illuminated cabinet and illuminated channel-letter signs. Mr. Seymour seconded and the motioned carried. Mr. Hibbard and Mr. Pederson voted nay.

7. **LANDMARKS DESIGNATION – 317 S. Barstow Street**

Mr. Ivory presented the proposed local landmark designation for 317 S. Barstow Street. The Landmarks Commission will be holding a public hearing to designate the 1898 Romanesque Revival designed building as a local landmark. In the past it was home to the Eau Claire Free Masons and a number of furniture stores. It is now the Antique Emporium. Some changes were made to the building but the historic significance remains. In 2007, it was listed on the National Register of Historical Places. The owners are in support of landmarking the building.

Plan Commissioners were in support of the property being designated as a local landmark property.

8. **DISCUSSION/DIRECTION**

A. West Riverside District Plan – Downzoning

Mr. Tufte stated the neighborhood plan calls for downzoning R-4 and R-3 properties to R-M. This is to ensure better consistency with existing residential uses and to reduce complications in real estate transactions. The neighborhood is the last around the downtown to be downzoned. It does not have a neighborhood association to help guide this downzoning process so the Plan Commission is being asked to lead it. The proposed process is to have an open house before public hearings. The open house could be at the Senior Center within the neighborhood.

The neighborhood consists of half renters and half owners. Many single-family homes are non-conforming because of the higher density residential zoning so they usually need a conditional use permit. Downzoning to an R-MP would allow a mixture of residential and reduce more non-conforming situations, especially with homes on smaller lots. R-MP would be the simplest approach but there are some areas that should be looked at closer.

If the commission agrees to begin with the process, the zoning ordinance should be amended to allow an exception to the public signing requirement to allow strategies like open houses. The amendment would be finished in March. Proposed downzoning maps would then be presented to the Commission before public open houses occur in April or May.

Commissioners favored the proposed process. Ms. Mitchell asked if the process could be changed if a neighborhood association formed. Mr. Tufte noted it was possible depending

on the circumstances. Mr. Weld stated other neighborhood association leaders could help mentor. Ms. Ebert asked that notices be placed in local business windows to reach renters better.

B. Comprehensive Plan, Plan Update

Mr. Tufte stated the community forum is scheduled for January 22, 2015 at RCU's Corporate Center from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The purpose is to present the plan's previous accomplishments, and assessment and issues report. Commissioners gave feedback and edits to the draft summary.

C. Code Compliance Items

None.

D. Future Agenda Items


None.

E. Additions or Corrections to Minutes

None.

9. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of January 5, 2015 were approved.



Jamie Radabaugh, Secretary